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SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [AORC](#) [ICJ](#) [KV](#) [ZA](#)
SUBJECT: ZAMBIA ON KOSOVO RECOGNITION

REF: A. STATE 11928
[1](#)B. 08 LUSAKA 530

Classified By: Ambassador Donald Booth for Reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary. Although the decision of whether or not to recognize Kosovo is still "under consideration" by the Zambian Government (GRZ), imminent action is unlikely. In a February 12 meeting, Foreign Ministry senior officials expressed concerns about the legal precedence that Kosovo recognition would establish and implied that the GRZ does not consider Kosovo recognition a priority. They did not refer to the Serbian resolution on Kosovo at the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The GRZ representatives suggested that Zambia could be persuaded to recognize Kosovo if it could be shown that Kosovo meets the four criteria of statehood defined by international law. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) On February 12, DCM discussed the issue and the Ref A talking points with Foreign Ministry Permanent Secretary Tens Kapoma and Zambia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Lazarous Kapambwe. Although the Zambian officials did not rule out the possibility of Kosovo recognition, they indicated by their response that Zambia would be unlikely to do so in the immediate future. Neither Kapoma nor Kapambwe mentioned the Serbian-sponsored UNGA resolution seeking an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice.

[1](#)3. (C) The GRZ representatives expressed reservations about the legal precedence that Kosovo recognition would establish. In particular, they conveyed some concern about the domestic legal ramifications vis-a-vis the Lozi tribe, an ethnic group in western Zambia within which remains some support for greater autonomy or full independence. Kapambwe implied that the USG's recognition of Kosovo is inconsistent with its refusal to recognize South Ossetian and Abkhazian secession from Georgia. Pol/Econ Chief encouraged the GRZ to consider the Kosovo situation separately and on its own merits.

[1](#)4. (C) Kapambwe suggested that Zambia could be persuaded to recognize Kosovo if Kosovo or the international community could establish that Kosovo meets four conditions for national sovereignty, according to the criteria for statehood laid down in the Montevideo Convention, including a permanent population, a defined territory, a government, and the capacity to conduct international relations. The Zambian officials did not say which of these conditions Kosovo had failed to meet.

[1](#)5. (C) Kapoma's tacit and reticent reaction appeared to be a departure from his 2008 remarks in which he had offered some faint hope to Ambassador and DCM that the GRZ might recognize Kosovo based on Zambia's general support for self-determination (Ref B). Post, however, has tempered its expectations with a realization that -- particularly given pressure from the Serbian and Russian Embassies -- Zambia is likely to equivocate in the absence of either a carrot or stick from us and/or the European Union donors who have recognized Kosovo.

